

Shatter [part two]

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Category: Buffy: The Vampire Slayer

Genre: Drama

Language: English

Status: In-Progress

Published: 2000-01-16 09:00:00

Updated: 2000-01-16 09:00:00

Packaged: 2016-04-27 12:19:21

Rating: M

Chapters: 1

Words: 954

Publisher: [www.fanfiction.net](http://www.fanfiction.net)

Summary: An alternate version of The Wish: Angel teams up with Willow and the other White Hats

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## Shatter

### part two

Angel moaned and shook his head slightly as he swam back into consciousness. The back of his head felt like it was being pressed onto hot coals, and as he lifted his hand to find out why he was in such pain, he realized he was chained down.

"What the...?" he muttered, opening his eyes and glancing around. He struggled briefly against his bonds before he was stilled by the sound of a cocking crossbow. He turned as best he could to find himself nose-to-bolt point and looked up into the cold eyes of the redhead.

"Wouldn't move if I were you," the boy called Xander commented from his position sprawled out on the library counter. "She's a killer shot."

"You don't have to keep me chained up," Angel reasoned, never taking his eyes off the redhead, partly terrified of her ability to shoot and kill him, and partly fascinated by the petite girl.

"Really?" the girl growled. Angel blinked at such a ferocious sound coming from her.

"I'm not like other vampires," he stated.

"If it looks like a demon," she replied.

"And moves like a demon," Xander continued.

"It's a demon," Angel finished, slumping back in the chair he was chained to.

"Willow, please don't kill the creature before we get a chance to confirm his identity," the librarian commented, stepping out of his office followed by a dark-haired woman. The redhead, Willow, smirked at the vampire but lowered the crossbow. "I can only find one reference to a vampire named Angel in the Chronicles," the librarian told the woman. "It only mentions that his name means 'The One with the Angelic Face'."

"Wow, the Watcher's finally get something right," Willow muttered, and Angel was torn by his reactions, pride at her acknowledgement of his attractiveness and fear at the mention of Watchers. After all, wherever the Watchers were, the Slayer wasn't far behind. Angel briefly wondered if the blonde girl Whistler showed him was still alive.

"I'm not sure if this is the Angel your clan cursed," the librarian continued, walking over to the table as Xander hopped off the counter and joined the little group. The woman shrugged, looking Angel over.

"Our records are sketchy, but they do mention a tattoo. The leader of the clan marked the Cursed One on his right shoulder blade," the woman replied.

"You heard the woman," Willow stated. "Strip."

"Sorry, I don't get naked on the first date," Angel smirked. Suddenly Angel found Willow's crossbow and a large crucifix carried by Xander shoved in his face. The redhead cocked an eyebrow. "Alright," he muttered. "But I can't very well do like this, can I?" he snapped, indicating the chains.

"Xand," Willow stated, tossing the boy her crossbow. He lowered it until the bolt was even with Angel's groin.

"You hurt her, you'll be writhing for centuries," the boy threatened as Willow pulled the key to his chains out of her pocket. She unlocked the chains and quickly moved out of reach as the vampire stood up. Angel glanced at the four humans before sighing and starting to unbutton his shirt.

"Cover your eyes, Will," Xander ordered, a teasing smile dancing on his lips.

"Trying to protect my virtue?" Willow replied.

"Yep," he answered.

"Won't work," she bantered.

"I know," he grinned as Angel finally tossed his shirt onto the table. He turned around, baring his muscular back to the group.

"That's the design," the woman commented.

"Good," the librarian commented. "Put your clothes back on," he ordered the vampire.

"Do I get to be chained up again?" Angel asked with mock enthusiasm.

"Not unless you enjoy it," Willow replied, smirking. Angel suppressed a laugh at her double entendre.

"Oh, I do," he replied. "But not right now."

"Pity," Willow replied, sitting down in a chair on the opposite side of the table from Angel. She propped her feet up and half-watched Angel and half-watched Giles.

"Ms. Calendar? I-I mean, Janna?" Giles called out as the woman headed for the library doors. She turned slightly and smiled at him. Giles stood there and stuttered for several seconds before Willow rolled her eyes and leaned forward.

"Giles? Do I have to ask her out for you?" she asked, causing the librarian to glare at her. She smirked and shrugged. Janna laughed at the exchange.

"Rupert?" she questioned, getting his attention again. "How would you feel about a picnic tomorrow?"

"I would like that," he smiled. She waved at the small group before heading out of the library.

"'Bout time, G," Xander grinned, sitting down next to Willow.

"Will she be okay?" Angel asked, watching the library doors swing closed.

"She's a gypsy," Willow shrugged. "But she's also a pretty powerful technopagan."

"Yeah, Janna's got powers we can't even conceive," Xander replied.

"I suppose official introductions should be made," Giles commented walking over to the group at the library table. "The obnoxious teenager is Xander Harris."

"Nice to meet you, Deadboy," the boy smirked with a small wave. Angel rolled his eyes at the nickname.

"The redhead is Willow Rosenberg," Giles continued. Willow raised her eyebrows and grinned at him. "I'm Rupert Giles."

"Most people just call him G-man," Xander commented. Giles sighed heavily, taking his glasses off and cleaning them with a rag he pulled out of his pocket.

"Once again, Xander--"

"Please refrain from calling me that," Xander finished.

"Welcome to the White Hats, Angel," Willow stated before breaking

into a fit of giggles at the bickering that continued between Xander and Giles.

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